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The Heat Is On: Variations among Male and Female Chefs

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Department of Sociology
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Arts

Brandi Wyatt-Hughes

May 2009

The Heat Is On: Variations among Male and Female Chefs

Date Recommended__April 27, 2009__

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The Heat Is On: Variations among Male and Female Chefs

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The primary purpose of this research was to examine a group of fourteen chefs, half male and half female, to determine the differences in the way male and female chefs do their job. To get an understanding of the perceptions of the chefs I conducted in-depth interviews with seven male chefs and seven female chefs. Definite differences were found in the way the chefs perceived their roles in the kitchen as well as how they managed their kitchens as a whole. Female chefs tended to manage their kitchens more collaboratively, thus creating and fostering a less emotional environment. Lack of emotionality in the kitchen is valuable in order to keep the staff performing optimally and to reduce disruptions during service. Female chefs were also greatly interested in creating an overall emotional experience for both their employees and the diners at their restaurants. Women seemed to appreciate

fundamental social interactions they experienced as part of being a chef. The women discussed working on their own emotions as a way to keep the kitchen on an even keel. Men, on the other hand, tended to expect employees to control their own emotions and discussed controlling their employees, which reflected a more hierarchical approach to their managerial style. Male chefs were more concerned with their image as chefs and how people perceived their food rather than cultivating a particular environment for the diners.

Both male and female chefs believed their approaches were effective in managing the kitchen. In a male-dominated profession that is traditionally masculinized, female chefs did not have to run their kitchens in a fashion similar to men; rather they tended to work in collaborative terms congruent with the expectations of the female gender role. Because the women worked in a more communal fashion, they relied more heavily on emotional labor to support and motivate their employees. Male chefs expected their employees to be responsible for their own behavior and tended to suggest separation from their employees rather than exhibiting an empathetic approach to their managerial styles.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Men, there's a revolution brewing in America's kitchen.

-Betty Friedan

While the number of women in American restaurant kitchens pales in comparison to men, there seems to be a rise in the number of women willing to venture into this line of work. The culinary field has long been revered as a way for men to rise to executive positions in the hopes of opening their own restaurants in the future, but recently there has been a steady growth of women stepping in to take the kitchen for a test drive. As more women venture into the "locker-room mentality," (Bourdain 2001) of the kitchen, questions arise about how gender impacts the dynamic of the restaurant kitchen.

I have been fascinated with the culture of the culinary industry for years. Because my husband is a chef, I have heard many stories of the difficulties women experience in the kitchen. On a whim I searched the city

of Nashville to see how many female chefs there were in fine dining, and to my amazement I found seven. When discussing this fact with male chefs, I got standard answers from most of them. The kitchen is grueling...long hours, working nights and weekends, and the attitude that women simply are not tough enough to deal with the rigors of the kitchen atmosphere. I question what "tough enough" really means and what the differences in a tough female chef and a male chef really are. I question whether female chefs have to conform to the norms of the masculine atmosphere rather than creating their own unique atmosphere. Julia Wood (2002) suggests our gendered identities are constructed at an early age through the adoption or rejection of feminine qualities. I question how the gendered identities of chefs impact the managerial styles within their kitchens. In this thesis I highlighted how gender creates variations among males and females in the kitchen.

The dramaturgical approach, a branch of symbolic interactionism, focuses on human behavior as a form of teamwork. In an ever changing environment, chefs are constantly interpreting the actions and reactions of their staff and patrons in order to develop and reinforce their sense of self as a chef. Power, status, and cohesion all

play major roles in the routinized production of the kitchen. The question then arises regarding whether a woman in the role of chef uses different emotional approaches in keeping the actors on board, and, if so, do the actors' emotions change according to the gender of their leadership.

Previous literature written about restaurants has been concentrated on the front of the house because elements of emotion management are obvious due to work with the public. Gary Fine's (1996) book entitled *Kitchens* analyzes the social workings of restaurant kitchens. He found that emotions, while highly guarded, are accepted as long as they are masculinized emotions such as anger. He also found that there is a distinct pattern of behavior among most kitchen employees and particular roles in most kitchens.

With routinized behavior in the kitchen being masculine, there are important aspects of Fine's work that he left unstudied. Other research on females in predominantly male professions has found that females have to work harder and control their emotions more frequently to be considered rational and dependable. Jennifer Pierce's (1995) research on female attorneys determined that women were encouraged to take on more masculinized

ways of emoting in order to be intimidating to clients. Last, Jack Barbalet's (1998) macro-social approach to emotion highlights the fact that stratification in institutions can create an issue called class resentment. He argues that oppressive conditions create embedded emotions due to individuals' inability to control their social positions. Managerial styles can either emphasize or reduce the occurrence of stratification in the workplace, and I question whether the gender of a chef can heighten the occurrence of resentment in the kitchen.

When females take on male-dominated roles in the workforce, it is assumed that they must take on one of two approaches, the bitch or the mother, to manage effectively the environment. In an environment that is fast-paced, physically demanding, and predominantly male and masculine, the question of female behavior is important. I intend to study the need for women to manage their own emotions and the emotions of others more often than their male counterparts in the kitchen would have to do. I theorize that because the kitchen environment is overwhelmingly male, women will be required to manage their emotions more frequently in order to be considered more effective chefs.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Social interaction is a necessity for those who go to work on a daily basis. For this reason individual presentation at work becomes important on many levels. Because emotion is an inevitable part of the self, its use is highly dependent upon an individual's presentation of self in his or her occupation. Chefs work in a highly stressful environment due to time constraints, heat, little personal space, and long working hours. Individuals within the kitchen, namely chefs, have to manage emotions in order to preserve the self and maintain the mood congruence of the kitchen.

Kitchens rely on synchronicity that is dependent upon the division of labor and the connections among the divisions (Fine 1996:78). Keeping the mood appropriate during collective activity is necessary to protect group performance and to create a positive team climate within the kitchen (Barsade 2002). Because females are expected to manage emotions more frequently due to their lower status in society (Hochschild 1983), the gender of the chef

might possibly be a factor in how a restaurant kitchen runs. Additionally, the fact that the kitchen itself is a masculinized environment provides additional obstacles to women moving into the occupation.

Factors Affecting Emotionality

Erving Goffman's work in *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (1959) revealed that individuals consistently practice impression management to maintain their sense of selfhood. Dramaturgical approach posits that individuals are constantly putting on a front in order to protect their self-image. The actor's performance is dependent upon the audience that, in turn, dictates the sense of "self" of the actor. Goffman explained emotion as a product of the outcome of a social situation. He also stressed that an individual must be able to carry out his or her role regardless of disruptions during performance. Because human interaction is a fragile process, there is a continual effort to preserve the sense of self.

In essence, a chef's sense of self is created and maintained by acting for the audience (staff or clientele). Unflawed performance and intense impression management are essential for optimal performance in the kitchen. If the performance is hindered by some type of disruption, the chef must be able to continue to fulfill the chef role in

order to protect the projected self. Because the chef occupation can be highly interactive and fluctuations in the environment are frequent, the chef encounters external occupational pressures on top of the pressure to preserve his or her role as a successful leader.

Gender and Emotions

Emotions within our society are not specific to either males or females; rather, particular emotions are more readily identified according to an individual's gender. Because males and females are socialized differently according to their gender, their emotional responses will differ depending on the gendered identity with which they affiliate. Arlie Hochschild's cultural theory of emotion draws on Goffman's view of self and emotion but differs by emphasizing internalized connections between emotion and performance. Hochschild posits that "feeling rules reflect patterns of social membership" and are a "guideline for assessments of fits and misfits between feelings and situations" (1983:566). In essence, individuals are not only taught what emotions are acceptable, but also what emotions are acceptable according to gender. Emotion management is considered a way to evoke emotion that is appropriate for feeling rules within our society. For example, a chef may tease, chide, or cajole a line cook for

her or his behavior, which Hochschild (2003:97) argues is a way of using "rule reminders" to keep the individual in sync with feeling rules. Feeling rules serve as a guide for maintaining appropriate behavior in our society. As much as gender determines what type of emotions we use, it also determines the particular feeling rules we have to follow.

Emotional labor or managing other's emotions is more commonly used in female occupations than in male occupations. Women are often expected to "be nice" as a part of their work description. According to Hochschild women are expected to manage their negative emotions more closely for fear of being seen as bitchy. For this reason a female chef may be expected to neutralize the environment and manage not only her own emotions more often but also the emotions of others solely because she is a female.

A female chef's acceptance of her gender role in the kitchen without the necessity of taking on a fully masculinized role eliminates role strain and the social discomfort that goes with it. Social identity theory concentrates on the processes in which individuals "adopt self-meanings and expectations to accompany the role as it relates to other roles within the group" (Stets and Berke 2000:226).

Because chefs and line cooks work long hours together and establish close relationships, male chefs frequently fill a fatherly role within the kitchen (Fine 1996:113). If a female chef also fulfills a parental role, then the assumption would be that she would exhibit motherly qualities in the kitchen. If female chefs accept their social role, that is one of a woman and a leader, they may gain a uniformity of perception and action due to their group-based identity (Stets and Berke 2000:226). This social identity is essential in understanding that the essence of feminine strength and leadership may be in the ability to manage emotions and perform emotional labor to achieve a highly functional organization.

The very success of a female chef could depend on the strengths within her female role and her comfort with the feminized role as a strong leader in the kitchen. As Barbara Bagilhole asked in her book about women in nontraditional occupations, "Are the women agents of change or have they changed themselves?" (Bagilhole 2003:593). The female chef's role acceptance of the strength to neutralize self and group emotion becomes a form of specialization that implies effective female leadership within the kitchen.

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE REVIEW

Throughout history women have had problems rising into leadership positions in male-dominated occupations. As women move into male-dominated occupations, there is a perception that they will have to take on the masculinized role or work harder in order to be considered adequate for the job. The meshing of the female role in the workforce necessitates the use of emotion management that is commonly used by women more frequently because of their lowered societal status (Hochschild 1983). This shadow work is considered additional work that females have to perform on top of their profession.

According to Julia Wood (2002), the additional nurturing that women have to do is a product of their socialization. Wood's research suggests mothers foster communal qualities in their daughters through their continual interaction with them. Mothers tend to curb their interactions with sons in order to show them how "not

to be like their mother" to reinforce their masculinity. Because girls are raised in consistent close proximity to their caregivers, they learn to be more interrelated with others and tend to exhibit more empathetic qualities (Wood 2002:65). The feminine qualities girls learn are further nurtured by the type of play and household duties they are asked to perform. Because boys are raised not to be like their mothers they understand a clear boundary of themselves and others, thus making them less responsive to empathy and interrelatedness. Male independence and separation is also nurtured in the types of play boys are geared to and the types of household duties they are expected to carry out. Because of gendered differences in socialization, femininity becomes the shared gender while masculinity becomes the distant gender.

The gendered differences created by the way males and females are parented lead them to exhibit agentic or communal qualities in adulthood. Agentic qualities are associated with masculine identity and consist of competition, independence, assertiveness, and autonomy. Communal qualities are associated with feminine identity and consist of cooperation, helpfulness, and nurturance. This concept becomes important when trying to differentiate styles of management between male and female chefs.

Many women believe that they have to be better than men at what they do and specialize in particular aspects of their job in order to get ahead (Rosen 2000:337). Are women expected to nurture their workers even if they are in a leadership position, or are they expected to adopt masculine qualities in order to be accepted into a traditionally male occupation?

Kitchen Success

Restaurant-kitchen success is dependent upon many factors including how the staff respects the role of their leader. Power, status, and rank are important factors in determining the level of respect within the kitchen environment. Social-role theory explains that as gendered roles in the workforce emerge, patterns of expected gendered behavior are tied to particular positions. The social expectation is that men take on roles with hierarchical (agentic) qualities and women take on roles with collaborative (communal) qualities (Wood 2002). As men and women move into positions dominated by the opposite gender, there are expectations that they take on hierarchical or collaborative approaches to fit into the occupation appropriately (Harrison and Lynch 2005). Women entering into a chef position may already get a lesser

level of respect simply because restaurant kitchens are set up in a patriarchal manner.

As women filter into kitchen positions, they have an option to either adopt the standard masculine way of doing things or to create their own way of running the kitchen. Ruth Wallace's (1993) study of Catholic women pastors suggested when females were not put on a pedestal as the leaders of the church, they tended to lead their parishes in a more collaborative manner. The collaborative approach is based on equality rather than the traditional hierarchical approach. Female pastors became mentors more than commanders, and as a result parishioners responded positively by becoming more involved and willing to volunteer. Although parishioners originally resisted the change in structure from an all-male leadership style, they were eventually willing and even eager to assist the female pastors. The willingness of the parishioners to pitch in created a greater sense of community in the female-run parishes (Wallace 1993).

When women deviate from their feminine role and adopt masculinized qualities, they may experience role conflict. Role conflict, concept found in role theory, suggests that women experience strain due to conflict between their expected gender role and actual work role in the occupation

(Epstein 1976). Individuals tend to be uncomfortable with deviation from sex-typed roles, and deviations from expected gender role norms can create a negative climate within the group (Harrison and Lynch 2005). A female chef with male line-cooks might very well “do paid work in the shadow of her home responsibilities” (Bagilhole 2003:594). This fact increases the probability that exhibiting motherly qualities will prevent role conflict and avoid discomfort for female chefs.

Because men are traditionally considered more powerful, women who venture into male-dominated positions have to negotiate their own power. They may have to “meet men’s ways and models of doing jobs” (Bagilhole 2004:595) in order to maintain the respect and power that men have traditionally earned in leadership positions. Many male chefs are considered fathers in the kitchen family (Fine 1996:113) because of the close relationships with their line cooks and long hours spent with them. If a female chef is expected to fit the role of a parent, then the assumption would be that kitchen staff would expect her to be a mother in the kitchen, which directly conflicts with the expectations of a strong chef.

Emotions in the Kitchen

Given the environment in which chef's work, there is no question that a number of factors can create emotionality within the kitchen. The dynamics of the environment are exaggerated due to time constraints, extreme heat, danger, and limited space. Even if a kitchen is running smoothly, many factors can affect situations, creating an uneasy and highly emotional atmosphere (Fine 1996). As with many workplaces, the kitchen staff enacts "feeling rules" to facilitate effective communication in high-pressure situations. These feeling rules are an unseen emotional guideline that chefs and subordinates are expected to follow in order to maintain harmony within the kitchen. Instances in which these guidelines are broken create discomfort, usually embarrassment, for the individuals who violate the rules.

The kitchen environment is dependent upon harmonious teamwork to accomplish tasks. Many factors affect the accomplishments of the kitchen staff. Kitchen work is not a prestigious career, nor is it a luxurious one. The long hours and pressure can create personal dissatisfaction that carries over into individuals' work attitudes. Fine's study revealed that when anger is evident and full cooperation is absent, the organization becomes

dysfunctional and needs help (1996:39). Many times cohesion within the kitchen is sustained by maintaining respect and keeping the emotions neutralized. Place-establishing encounters can destabilize the work environment and create the inability for an organization to run smoothly.

Time is of the essence in a restaurant kitchen, and a busy night can make or break the spirit of its workers. The "flow" during a rush is highly dependent upon the organizational unity and productivity of the working unit. Often the chef must neutralize emotional issues that might get in the way of this process by creating an acceptable working atmosphere. The chef must also expedite orders in order to ensure the efficacy of the line.

The Saturday night rush is a great example of how structure, time, and emotion can come together to create either exhilarating accomplishment or catastrophic failure. The success or failure of a rush is dependent on "synchronicity which demands a division of labor and connections among the divisions" (Fine 1996:78).

A rush in the restaurant industry occurs when a large number of patrons are seated at once and the kitchen experiences an enormous amount of pressure to get dishes cooked and plated in sufficient time. The reinforcement of cooperation during a rush brings an emotional reward in the

form of an overall sense of achievement, while a lack of synchronicity can create both negative emotion and behavior. The line in the kitchen is very similar to an assembly line in a factory. Different stations exist for different types of dishes. The intense pressure of time can create emotionality on the line that can be neutralized or exacerbated depending upon how synchronized and “in the zone” the kitchen staff is. Keeping the mood appropriate, which is also called mood congruence, is predicated upon the kitchen’s commitment to the team, perception of a positive team climate, happiness, and engagement in collective activity (Barsade 2002).

Gender and Emotions

Because female occupations typically require more use of emotion management and women have less power and status in society (Hochschild 1983), emotions become a form of currency to improve the plight of women as lower-status individuals. The separation of males and females in the use of emotion management and emotional labor becomes much more prominent in the workplace because men are not as well trained in using emotion as a resource (Hochschild 1983).

Many males “place the highest value on their identity in the eyes of other men” (Collinson 2003:533). In the development of their masculinity, men reject what is

considered feminine in order to reinforce their manhood. Part of this rejection of feminine approaches reinforces and emphasizes what it means to be masculine in society (Wood 2002:65). Because men determine their sense of self according to other men, they have to "continually reaffirm their gendered identity and struggle with ambiguity, tension and contradiction" within their workplace (533). Preoccupied with preserving their identities, men experience insecurities rather than eliminating them through attempts to preserve their identity. This continual need for self preservation creates a differentiated climate, thus creating emotions due to stratification.

Compatible emotion in the workplace decreases status differentiation, while incompatible emotion increases status differentiation (Lovaglia and Houser 1996). This concept is important in understanding how the male inability to manage emotion effectively and the necessity continually to preserve self identity increases status differentiation that, in turn, creates a negative emotional climate and potential problems in the workplace. Because women are already of lower social status and have little to gain from establishing their gender identity, there is little need continually to preserve identity in the eyes of others. In addition, women have been socialized to identify

with others and be more empathetic (Wood 67), which results in a decrease in status division and the ability to maintain a comfortable emotional climate that could possibly help to bind the group.

Hochschild (1983) studied the use of emotional currency in the workplace as a way for individuals to utilize a specialization to heighten their status. The use of emotional currency is also an important factor within leadership roles. According to structural exchange theory, power must be legitimated by members in order to be effective, and moderated power that confers benefits in return for submission is most valuable (Blau 1986:280). As female chefs use emotion management/labor within the kitchen and eliminate the emotionality that comes from differentiation, line cooks will legitimate the chef's power through conferring the reward and benefits of nonemotionality. For example, a female chef may forgo embarrassing the line cook and take an approach that will lessen the emotionality of the situation. In return, the line cook will not challenge her authority and will respect her leadership role in the kitchen because he or she received adequate benefits for submission within the exchange.

CHAPTER IV

METHODS

In this chapter I outline the methods used for this project. The names of all participants have been changed to pseudonyms in order to protect their privacy. Qualitative analysis was used for this project in order to gain an overall understanding of the chef occupation as well as understanding of how men and women differ in their explanations of their line of work. Patterning within interview responses is fundamental in determining generalized views of managerial styles in the kitchen as well as how gender affects the chef's overall views of the occupation. The social implications of gender are often highlighted in actions and words without outward acknowledgement of their existence; for this reason brief observations and in depth interviews were effective in approaching my topic and getting more nearly honest answers.

A qualitative approach was chosen in order to determine how working in an emotional climate affects how

chefs manage the overall function of the kitchen. Because Hochschild (1983) claims that women tend to use emotion as a form of currency, I was interested in finding out whether the use of emotion management and emotional labor is more common among the male or the female population of chefs. I was also interested to see whether gender impacted how men and women explain their occupations because often the wording a person uses can offer great insight into how she or he sees his or her occupational role.

I observed six kitchens, three male and three female, to get a general idea of how kitchens work and what the environment was like. The observation of kitchen dynamics, chef participation, cohesiveness, and the language offered a general idea of the emotional climate within the kitchen. All the observations were performed on weekend nights, which are normally the busiest time for restaurants. Busiest times were chosen to ensure an accurate view of the kitchen's emotional climate during high-stress situations. Shortly following visits field notes were taken to ensure the accurate recording of data. These observations proved very helpful in my understanding of what the kitchen occupation is like.

The majority of my research is based on interviews of both male and female chefs. All chefs worked in fine-

dining restaurants in two states in the South. Seven male chefs and seven female chefs were selected for interviewing, and interview lengths varied with an average of 30-45 questions on the interview schedule. All the interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim when completed. All the data gathered have been interpreted and analyzed in order to provide sufficient support to the study.

It proved difficult to get enough time to conduct interviews because the nature of the chef's job is extremely demanding. I had to reschedule a number of interviews due to cancellations and no shows. Interviews were frequently interrupted by deliveries, questions from employees, and the chefs having to check on food. Also, because of the economic climate, it became increasingly difficult to get interviews because many privately owned fine-dining restaurants went out of business during the time of my study. Many of the women tended to be owners rather than working for someone, and it seems they were greatly impacted by the recent economic downturn. Overall, changes in the economic climate impacted a number of restaurants in the area where I conducted my research.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

I observed six restaurant kitchens and interviewed fourteen chefs during this project. Seven of the chefs were female and seven were male. Five of the female chefs interviewed were owners or part owners of the restaurants in which they worked, while only one of the male chefs owned his own restaurant. The other eight chefs were employed at restaurants owned by someone else but had full control over the production of the kitchen. The subjects ranged in age from twenty-four to fifty-one, and their education and amount of time in the industry varied greatly as well. Appendix C contains additional information about individuals interviewed.

During kitchen observations I obtained a better understanding of the workings of restaurant kitchens. During dinner service the line is hot, hectic, and loud. Depending on how busy the kitchen is, the noise level grows. While the chef calls out orders, the rest of the kitchen works into a heated frenzy as doors slam, flaming

pans sizzle, and dishes clang. As a list of thirty tickets print up, with an average of four dishes on each ticket, the chef and line cooks focus attentively trying to keep calm. As the night goes on, the stress continues; and, depending on the chef's performance, the line can flow smoothly or it cracks under the pressure. Most of the chefs I interviewed worked at least twelve-hour days, and it was not unusual for them to get only one day off a week.

During the day, when there is no service, chefs and staff work to complete their prep for the evening events. The time during the day is usually when stock and supply orders come in and prep lists are made in order to prepare for the evening service. Though I did not officially observe during the days, all of my interviews occurred when the chefs had extra time, which was usually around 11:00 in the morning. Throughout the course of my interviewing there were many disruptions and I realized that, as soon as chefs step in the door, they are busy. Many times interviews had to be stopped in order for chefs to do things. It seems they are always racing around trying to beat the clock in order to be ready for what is to come. The chefs seemed to be trapped in a dichotomy of enjoying the challenge that time brings and loathing the pressures and stress of the challenge. Most of the chefs dressed

comfortably, wearing chef jackets or t-shirts and chef pants. For the most part male and female chefs look exactly the same as far as uniform is concerned. The women did not wear make-up, and their hair was either tied back or covered by a hat. The kitchen did seem to be more relaxed in the mornings even though there was a lot to be done. While doing prep, line cooks joke around about their weekend or make fun of each other. On one occasion the cooks were asking each other what their theme song would be if they were strippers. When observing the female chefs' kitchens I noticed a distinct difference in the kitchen environment. The female chefs had special shrines dedicated to the kitchen family. Usually it included photos of their children, photos of the cooks themselves, or funny anecdotes that reflected inside jokes. The kitchens of the male chefs did not have anything of this nature in their kitchens.

My findings for this project are divided into four sections: why chefs chose the restaurant industry and why it attracted them, success as a chef achieved through the effectiveness of managerial style and kitchen skills, rewards of the occupation, and emotionality in the kitchen. Five of the male chefs and only one of the female chefs I interviewed began his or her culinary career as a

dishwasher and worked his or her way up to the chef position. The other eight began idle jobs in the restaurant industry and continued, even with degrees in other areas. It appears as though many stayed in the business even if they had gone to college for something else because they fell in love with the line of work. Four of the chefs, male and female, seem to appreciate the diversity of the kitchen atmosphere. That being said, the elements the other chefs love about the kitchen differ according to their gender. In order to understand whether there is a difference in the vision of the nature of being a chef according to gender, I began by asking why chefs chose the restaurant industry.

Why the Restaurant Industry?

I was very interested in why individuals would choose the chef profession when it is known to be a grueling and time-consuming occupation. By asking why chefs chose the restaurant industry, I was able to learn what the appeal is in this line of work. Three of the respondents seem to enjoy the freedom and flexibility of the occupation:

I loved the people, and I loved how relaxed the atmosphere was. Don't get me wrong; it's stressful but the people are very different than what you get working a mall job or something.
(Emma, female chef, 39)

I love instant gratification...I can still be me. I have a trash mouth, and I can be a trash mouth. I can wear shorts and a t-shirt but carry professionalism through my food. (Denise, female chef, 51)

I love cooking and it's a different lifestyle. I can't do a 9-5. I just can't. I tried to sit and work in a cubicle and no. It's 10-12-hour days you go home and live to do it again the next day. (Sam, male chef, 30)

Another three of the chefs seemed to be attracted to the variety and quality of people that tend to work in the kitchen.

I'd say the people. I started because I loved to cook, and then the people and the culture were a bonus. It crosses all cultural lines. (Mary, female chef, 34)

All the different people you meet... I've always worked with a very diverse group, from dishwashers to line cooks. This industry attracts a diverse group of people and it's great. (Edie, female chef, 42)

I've worked all over, and it's great to get to know all the different cultures in the kitchen... I find the kindest, honest, and hard working people I've ever known in this business. (Joe, male chef, 48)

Four of the male chefs were attracted to the occupation because of its rebellious nature. There is a rogue sensibility that seems to be a cause for attraction for only the male chefs when they explain their appeal for the restaurant industry:

Financial stability now, but back in the day it was because I was a bad a-- and doing shi-- no one else was, ego mostly.
(Steve, male chef, 41)

The lifestyle was probably the main reason. Work hard and play even harder. After a shift everyone would go out together. It was like a big family.
(Jay, male chef, 34)

The line cooks were my heroes when I was 16. They partied and got all the girls ya know I just thought that would be cool. A rock star kind of lifestyle.
(Tom, male chef, 39)

Lack of motivation and drinking for free.
(Gary, male chef, 33)

While five of the women explained the attraction to the occupation through freedom for themselves or through the appreciation of the people, four of the male respondents suggest their fulfillment came from the image created by the occupation. Because the kitchen culture is masculinized, the male chefs seem to form a direct identity from the chef role. The kitchen culture itself seems to be a big draw to most of the individuals. However, females were initially attracted to the socially relaxed environment and flexibility the kitchen atmosphere offered. More of the men were initially attracted to the lifestyle and image associated with the kitchen, suggesting their masculinity is in some way tied to behavioral expectations that occur in the kitchen.

Kitchen Skills and Managerial Style

The effectiveness of kitchen management determines how successful a kitchen is. I asked chefs what they felt were important skills in their kitchen and how they tied into their managerial style. I was interested to see whether women had a different skill set and whether it affected the way they managed their kitchens. For the most part the female chefs worked on the entire environment of their kitchen. They discussed the staff but also discussed how they had to work on themselves to create an environment that was effective.

Five of the female chefs tended to feel it was important to gain respect by being fair, and controlling their tempers was very important. Those same women tended to suggest that the kitchen is more effective when people are being nurtured and treated fairly without a highly emotional climate. They even suggested a type of trade; in other words, to get people to do things there are certain approaches that produce the desirable outcome. Six of the female chefs suggested that anger is not something they feel is effective in their kitchen. There is a continual pattern of women mentioning various qualities that support their communal approach and collaborative leadership styles:

I think it's being fun but being able to keep the respect level there. I mean I want my line cooks to come in and want to work, but I want them to learn and enjoy being here. Part of the deal is you want to be a good leader, but you can't get people to follow if you treat them like crap. I like the fact people want to talk about their personal lives here and feel comfortable enough to do it, but there is a line I have to maintain in order to keep the respect of my cooks. I can be a mentor, but I have to make sure I can prove I'm a good leader too. If people hate being here, they aren't going to put love into their work so I have to create an environment where they want to produce for me. (Erin, female chef, 39)

I try to manage fairly. If I discipline for something, then I'm consistent—in praising too. I worked for an old school European chef, and they'd scream and throw stuff, and pans would be flying, and I can remember so clearly that, if I ever became a chef, that I would never treat people like that and respect everyone and appreciate them for who they are. To understand that everyone isn't on the same level and you have to tap into what each person brings to their job. Not all hungry for the field some just want hours and to go home. You have to have a balance for that. (Edie, female chef, 42)

Patience and organization. I mean, you have to be able to multitask and listen to lots of people talking to you at once. You have to understand and be able to deal with it. You have to be patient. I have 30 people working for me, and in this kitchen alone each person has a different skill level. You can't treat people the same at different skill levels so you have to be patient with them. (Jenny, female chef, 30)

It's an emotional field, and there's a lot of drama in it. I would like less drama but being able to keep yourself calm during all that. There is so much to the people you hire and who you attract and the habits you allow in the kitchen, and then later you say that's not ok. (Mary, female chef, 45)

I'll always step up, but I don't scream or yell, and it takes a lot to get me angry. I think as you get older you have to hold in the negativity until to later on in the evening when you can approach it without getting angry. The best remedy for anger is delay, and you have to teach yourself that in this business because that's what makes a screamer. Some people are very effective with that, but I always feel guilty. You have to keep a balance and eye appeal... I have to be a mother, father, sister, a psychologist, and a family therapist. You have to have fun, have a sense of humor, keep the staff on their toes. (Denise, female chef, 51)

Reason and understanding. Being fast but on the other hand keeping everything in perspective. Ya know knowing that you have to get the tickets out, but no one is gonna like beat you. They'll yell like hell but no injuries. (Lana, female chef, 34)

I would say keeping a sense of control over your emotions, not letting things get to you. I mean you have to make sure you keep the kitchen in control and have the ability to focus. You have to have your heart and soul into it. It's not about stroking your ego; you also have a bottom line to meet. (Kelly, female chef, 35)

For the most part women focused on what they had to do to create an effective environment for their kitchens. Six of the women approached the question by explaining how they control themselves in order to produce a high quality kitchen experience. They mention particular things they do or hold back in order to produce certain results in their kitchens. They also emphasize patience and balance when discussing how to deal with their employees and the fact that they have to be able to listen and nurture as part of their job.

As far as the male chefs go, at least four of them discussed control over the employees and how to manipulate their employees' behavior through their management style. The males discussed leadership, rather than working with the employees, as a way of achieving optimal performance from their employees. Two of the male chefs even suggested they have to watch for their employees' flaws and have to be authoritative so employees can get a good understanding of what is expected of them. It is clear that males feel more comfortable looking at their employees more critically and are less concerned with the overall employee environment. Nurturance is absent while leadership is stressed when chefs discuss their skills. None of the male

chefs expressed any concern with happiness or how much fun the environment was in their responses:

You have to be even keel, I mean not necessarily- you can let your emotions hang out, but you have to be able to keep your heart rate down when everything is getting f-----ed up. Besides the obvious skills, you have to be able to control your emotions. (Gary, male chef, 33)

Leadership, communication, creativity, palette, and strong work ethic... Without leadership you couldn't control your employees. If you can't communicate correctly, no one would know what their role is in the kitchen. (Jay, male chef, 34)

Brutally honest, crass, and encouraging. You can't sugarcoat it. Give praise when needed and criticize everything. Being better than yesterday is the goal. (Steve, male chef, 41)

Not sucking! You have to stay on the ball and take things seriously. It's not an easy job. You don't sit at a desk; you run a kitchen, and you have to stay on your toes to make sure the food that goes out is perfect...keeping everyone in line and motivated is really important. (Dunn, male chef, 24)

Multitasking and being understanding. In the kitchen there are all types of people, and you have to control them. Ya know you have women and guys you have to have control. (Sam, male chef, 30)

I manage everyone differently. I want to be a leader, but I manage them first. They always have some type of issue being late or sloppy and I try to iron that out early, and ideally you want employees you don't have to manage but only lead. I

guess I'd like to be is a leader who can set the vision and put ideas out there, but at the end of the day I still have to manage to get what I need out of them.
(Joe, male chef, 48)

Male chefs speak in more autonomous terms when discussing their leadership styles in the kitchen. Their managerial styles are dependent upon keeping employees motivated and on their toes and suggesting the importance of management and pointing out their flaws to maintain an optimal level of production in their kitchens. The male chefs' approaches suggest less empathy in terms of relating to past chef experiences to how they approach their own managerial styles.

Rewards of Being a Chef

It was clear that creating great food was on the top of the chefs' lists of things that are rewarding about their occupation, but there seemed to be a clear difference in the way men and women explained the rewards and also the view of what was important about people getting great food in their restaurants. Five of the female chefs focused on the happiness and the experience of the customer:

I think it's when people leave the restaurant happy and they get what they came for. I did my job, and that's really why I do what I do. I'm in a service industry; and if I'm delivering a great experience, then that makes me happy.
(Emma, female chef, 39)

I think making customers happy. People come in the kitchen, and they'll rave about the food so I'm glad we're here, and I'm glad to offer something different and make up my own stuff... Some people come here and don't like it, but I have people send me notes and letters and stuff so it's great. (Denise, female chef, 51)

I like making people happy because sometimes you do, and sometimes you don't. It's great to know that I created something that someone is getting enjoyment out of. (Edie, female chef, 42)

I write books, and as far as the restaurant I'd like to think of this place where people can slow down and be treated and have a lovely meal. That's all I want it to be, but it's so much. (Mary, female chef, 45)

The customers, to be able to take care of somebody and to watch them from beginning to end-- food, service, and wine-- and take away their bad day. Giving someone a good experience is the best high you can get from this job. Seeing them leave happy. (Kelly, female chef, 35)

Making people happy is a theme that five of the female chefs expressed in their explanations of the rewards of being a chef. These findings suggest women tend to be more interested in the happiness of the customer than how the customer views them or their food. The female chef's attachment lies with the customer rather than with the food. The focus tends to be more on the overall emotional experience than food alone. Women explain being able to

give the customer an experience when they come into the restaurant. They also suggest being able to take care of people and see their happiness in the entire experience. When asked what was rewarding, three of the female chefs also focused on the mentoring and the interactional aspects of their positions in the kitchen:

I love what I do, and a lot of times the interaction with people combined with the challenge of the work. (Jenny, female chef, 30)

Mentoring. I'm used to being surrounded by people all day. I'm not sure I can recreate that social situation without it being work. (Lana, female chef, 34)

I like the fact people want to talk about their personal lives here and feel comfortable enough to do it, but there is a line I have to maintain in order to keep the respect of my cooks. I can be a mentor, but I have to make sure I can prove I'm a good leader too. (Emma, female chef, 39)

These responses suggest the women get gratification from the fundamental social interaction the kitchen atmosphere provides. The process of interaction in the kitchen and the social rewards the women get from their occupation reinforces the concept of collaborative leadership as a result of feminized gender identity. Five of the male chefs focused on personal ownership of the food and gratification from the process of producing great food:

The instant gratification of it... We make something and give it to someone and we get an instant reward for our work. (Tom, male chef, 39)

When people tell me they love the food. That's when I feel the best about myself. (Dunn, male chef 24)

The gratitude you get from people. It makes me feel really good. (Jay, male chef, 34)

A person comes here for the first time and has the best meal of their life. For the chef you cannot beat that. If they tried the crème brulee and they say yours is the best, that's a compliment... That's what I'm in the business for. (Sam, male chef, 30)

It's uhh when I get compliments or if I work hard on a dinner that's technically challenging that can be rewarding on the shortterm with instant gratification... Long term it's money. (Joe, male chef, 48)

When males talk about the rewards of being a chef, they discuss customer experiences and tend to focus on the gratitude from the customer and rewards coming from the recognition of their food rather than the experience of the customer itself. For men it seems to be a tangible reward of recognition for themselves, while women are more interested in creating a positive emotional experience for others (customers). Because feminine identity focuses on interrelatedness with others, nurturing, and relatedness,

the female chefs tend to be very focused on creating an entire positive emotional experience as a chef.

Negative Emotionality in the Kitchen

Negative emotions are emotions that disrupt the fluidity of the kitchen. Because anger is a masculine emotion, it is tolerated in the kitchen but is still seen as problematic when it affects the productivity of the employees. When men were asked what happens when people get emotional in the kitchen, they agreed that negative emotions were a common theme in the kitchen and they want their line cooks to take care of their own emotions. The male chefs did not discuss in any way how their emotions impact their employees' behavior. Six of the male chefs spoke in terms of trying to eliminate and control the problem of negative emotion altogether:

We make fun of each other. If you can't handle the bullsh--, tough. (Sam, male chef, 30)

Tell them to take a break for 15 minutes and come back with a different attitude... Sometimes it's very contagious, and it can cause other people to feel the same way... In the middle of service you try to nip it in the butt and get control of it. (Jay, male chef, 34)

I pull them aside and let them know I'm here for them. It's bullsh--, and most of the time people pull through or they're gone... I fight through it and lead by

example and kick everyone's ass the next day. (Steve, male chef, 41)

I bottle it up and put a cap on it. (Tom, male chef, 39)

I think I try to run a nonemotional kitchen for the most part. Umm, anger is pretty common. When stuff starts to fall apart, you just wanna throw stuff. Doesn't really help, but it happens a lot. I feel like it's my responsibility to make sure all the people are working in sync to keep the food looking good. (Dunn, male chef, 24)

I don't work well with people that talk back to me. I get angry and aggressive and if someone does it, they find out quickly it doesn't work. I think my workers know how to hide their emotions, but they come into my office and talk to me if they need to...I sometimes wonder if I give my employees enough breathing room to express themselves, but my reaction is always that it needs to be contained. (Joe, male chef, 48)

Leadership seems to be an important theme with the male chefs; and while they think the effectiveness of their leadership affects the productivity of the kitchen, they never suggest tailoring their behavior to help an emotionally volatile situation. Instead the male chefs tend to suggest the emotional person take personal accountability for his or her issue. Male chefs even discuss the need to leave the kitchen if the individuals cannot adapt to their leadership style, which behavior reinforces the hierarchical power dynamic in male kitchens.

The language that female chefs tended to use was interesting. Like the male chefs, women agreed negative emotions were not good for the kitchen. Rather than talk about getting rid of emotion as men did, they tended to focus on ways to keep the environment neutralized through their own techniques. The female chefs' concentration seemed to focus more on fairness and balance. Women also tend to suggest things they do personally that help control the climate of the kitchen. When the female chefs speak of the emotionality of the kitchen, they tend to take personal ownership of the emotional climate by suggesting things they do to improve the emotionality through their own actions, thus improving the kitchen experience. One of the female chefs answers using "we" rather than "I" suggest the emphasis of the group rather than the individual:

If you upset someone in the middle of a shift it won't make the situation better for anyone... I've only screamed about 5 times in 10 years, but sometimes you have to let em know you have it in ya. Sometimes they'll take advantage, but I'd rather be fair. (Denise, female chef, 51)

You have to keep it under control. The most important thing is keeping things even because, when everything's going into the sh--, someone's got to be running the ship! (Kelly, female chef, 35)

I try to. I mean I've been angry, but I try to take the person aside and tell

them this isn't right and we need to make sure next time it's done correctly. As long as someone learns from the mistakes, the key is to learn from that. I'm not a person that will scream and yell in the kitchen. I've been there, and I know how that felt. I also don't think it's good for the whole- everybody else. (Edie, female chef, 42)

We try really hard to keep it at an even keel and umm it's hard... We have to work as one, and there can't be a problem between the front and back of the house. (Mary, female chef, 45)

Two of the female chefs emphasize the importance of forgoing any kind of embarrassment by taking people aside when handling heated situations, and five of the chefs emphasize the necessity of being understanding in order to help manage employees. The female chefs keep the emphasis on being fair and maintaining a balance when trying to maintain the emotional integrity of the kitchen. Female chefs suggest that keeping things even is essential in the success of the kitchen, while men suggest that keeping things in order and under control is important. The differences men and women see in leadership styles are determined by the gendered identity socialization with which they affiliate.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

The primary goal of this project was to determine whether differences exist between male and females chefs. I was also interested in how emotions are handled in the kitchen and, in particular, in any gender divisions that occur within the occupation. Using symbolic interactionism as my theoretical base, I was able to determine that males and females not only handle their kitchens differently but also approach their entire chef role in a different way. While almost all of the chefs agreed that good food was the highest priority, the processes in which male and female chefs create wonderful food differs greatly.

While I visited only a limited number of kitchens, I realized there is uniformity to most kitchens. Even though the kitchens vary in size and composition, they all function in a very similar fashion despite minor differences. Most kitchens function in a relaxed manner during nonbusiness hours, and when the kitchen opens for service things are taken much more seriously. While I experienced visible differences in how chefs managed the

kitchens, I am unable to draw sufficient conclusions because of the limited number of kitchens I observed.

When it comes to kitchen success, males and females differ greatly in what they see as important in the kitchen. Women tended to discuss the ability to maintain respect and keep balance in the kitchen. They also suggest that being calm, patient, and understanding is important in creating a good environment for employees. One chef even discussed the notion that being a chef is being like a therapist because he or she has to be able to listen. Most of the women's skills are based on creating a noncritical and balanced environment in order to establish respect from the employees. Women are exhibiting communal qualities in their approaches, and their work styles are congruent with the collaborative approaches discussed in Ruth Wallace's 1993 article of women pastors.

Men tend to talk about controlling their emotions and their employees but never suggest they have to earn respect. They stress the importance of leadership and the importance of being critical of their employees as a way of keeping them on their toes and in line. Not only are men exhibiting the qualities of the hierarchical approach of leadership, but they are exhibiting the agentic qualities of autonomy, independence, and competitiveness, which are

all admired traits of masculinity (Wood 2002). Their lack of discussion of emotion and unwillingness to take responsibility for their employees' emotions reinforces the concept of independence and lack of empathy because of rigid ego boundaries.

Overall the findings suggest that female chefs are seeking to create a more collaborative environment through the use of communal identity traits and choose to bypass the hierarchical value of their position as chef. Through cultivating a kitchen that is fair, balanced, and free of negative emotion, they reduce the amount of friction that results from typical power relations that occur in the workplace, thus resulting in a positive team climate (Barsade 2002). Males tend to see being a chef as a hierarchical type of position because they discuss keeping control over employees and being critical of what employees are doing. This process reinforces the belief that the chef is the leader and the employees are expected to follow his way of doing things. It seems the male and female chefs are fulfilling their gender roles by fulfilling male or female stereotypes in the kitchen as well.

Because women are bringing their gender roles into the kitchen, they are also introducing their own way of fulfilling the obligations of their male-dominated

occupations. Older chefs mentioned how they were treated as "one of the guys" when they were getting into the restaurant industry. After the women obtained leadership positions, they managed to create their own style, drawing on the negative aspects of their own experience. Many women talked about not wanting to treat their employees as they were treated when they were line cooks.

Negative emotion in the kitchen is a common occurrence because the nature of the work is stressful. Most of the male chefs I interviewed discussed emotion as something that needed to be controlled and kept bottled up during dinner service. They tended to consider negative emotion something that the employees have to get over or they just are not cut out to work in the kitchen. There tended to be a consensus among most of the male chefs that their employees are in charge of their own emotions and need to learn how to control them. Female chefs, on the other hand, tended to suggest keeping things even and balanced rather than controlling things. Most of the females suggested ways they keep the kitchen on an even keel through their own behavior. They tend to see the mood congruence or happy climate of their kitchen as highly dependent on their own personal emotion.

Both males and females seem to use emotion management frequently, but it is evident that women see the emotionality of their kitchen as something they can control through their own emotions. Female chefs measure the success of their kitchen by emotional leadership or how effectively they can cultivate the emotional climate of the kitchen through fairness and balance. Male chefs see their kitchen success based on typical leadership through motivation, control, and management.

The chef role itself is interesting because many of the male chefs love the image of being a chef because it has a rugged quality to it. Many of the women enjoy being chefs because they love the people. Men seem to carry the image associated with being a chef into all aspects of their work. Many of the men feel a major perk of their occupation occurs when people love the food and associate the food with them. The food is an extension of their sense of identity. Many of the women seem to carry their enjoyment of interaction with people into all aspects of their work because they discuss not only cultivating a great environment for their staff but creating an amazing emotional experience for the customer as well. They emphasize the happiness and the experience of the diners rather than the quality of food as being important in the

total experience. They see the experience as being as important a reflection of their sense of self as the food is.

For this project I wanted to see whether female chefs in the restaurant industry have to work harder just because they are female. My conclusion is yes, but they work harder in a different way. The women have to work harder to cultivate an environment in the kitchen, which, in turn, accommodates their lowered status as a female. They also have higher expectations of themselves as chefs. They not only want to create wonderful food for the diners but they want to create a wonderful experience for them as well. The female chef's job is one of duality; they are food managers as well as emotional-climate managers, reinforcing the old adage that women have to work twice as hard when they are in male-dominated positions.

Did researching in the South offer a less authentic perspective on the role of a female chef? Being a Southern girl myself, I assumed being in the South was a drawback. I now see that location is more of a structural issue because only two of the females I interviewed were born in the South and three of the males chefs interviewed were from the South. The other nine chefs relocated to this area with family or for work. The fact that these chefs

did not grow up in the South suggests the gendered differences in the roles of the chef are cultural and structural rather than a regional issue.

A suggestion for future research in this area would include extensive interviews with the employees of male and female chefs to determine their opinions of management styles. Research might be included on how age impacts the managerial styles of chefs, especially women. I would suggest a qualitative study with the husbands and wives of chefs. The divorce rates of chefs are high. Because chefs work many hours--including weekends, holidays, and primarily night hours--it would be interesting to see the impacts on the families of chefs and whether they differ by gender. Research on females in other male-dominated occupations would be beneficial in understanding collaborative and hierarchal leadership approaches. It would be interesting to see if men are impacted the same in female dominated occupations. It would be useful to see whether the longevity of being a chef varies by gender due to marriage or having children.

APPENDIX A

RESPONDENT CONSENT FORM

Management Styles of Male and Female Chefs.

-----Respondent Consent Form-----

The purpose of this study is to analyze the managerial styles of chefs. This project is being conducted in an effort to complete a Master's Degree in Sociology. Respondents will be asked to respond to a number of questions concerning managerial techniques. Each person interviewed will be recorded via audio recorder. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study. All respondents' names will be replaced with pseudonyms at the end of data collection to ensure anonymity.

Respondents will be reminded that their participation is voluntary and that they are able to terminate the interview at any time. They will also have the right to forgo any questions with which they feel uncomfortable. By participating, the respondents give the researcher the right to use all information for completion of a thesis and in any other literature in the future.

I understand the above information and agree to participate according to the provisions stated above. I also understand that I will receive a signed copy of this form, and I am free to contact Brandi Wyatt-Hughes at brandi.wyatt-hughes@wku.edu for further information.

Respondent's Name _____

Interviewer's Name_____

Respondent's Signature_____

Interviewer's Name_____

Date_____

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Intro Questions

Did you grow up here?
How did you get started in the restaurant business?
Did you go to culinary school? Why?
Where is your favorite place to eat? Why?
Do you cook at home? If yes, how often? If no, why?
Do you have a family?
How old are you?
Do you feel your career choice has impacted your family life?
Are you a night owl?
How long have you been in the restaurant business?
What would you do if you weren't a chef?
What do you do to unwind in your spare time? Why?
Do you enjoy your line of work? Why?

Kitchen Management

What most interested you about the restaurant industry?
What skills do you feel are most important in the kitchen?
Why are they important?
What do you feel is the most rewarding part of your job?
Least rewarding? Why?
Have you ever had a major conflict with a line cook? If yes, please describe
Do you find it hard to turn off your kitchen role at the end of the night? Why?
What situations usually cause problems in the kitchen? How do you handle them? Why?
What one word would most summarize your kitchen?
How would you best summarize your managerial style?
Can a person become a chef at any age?

Emotion in the kitchen

How do you feel about overly emotional people in the kitchen? Why?

What emotion is most common in the kitchen? Least common?
 Are there certain situations that create a more negative emotional environment in the kitchen?

What do you do if someone makes a big mistake? Why?

What type of personal investment do you feel you have in your kitchen? Do you think about it outside of work?

On a scale of 1 to 10 how emotionally charged is your kitchen?

1=not emotional 10=severely emotional

When are you most happy in the kitchen? Why?

What do you do if you are feeling negative emotions in the kitchen?

What role do you feel that humor plays in the kitchen? Any stories?

What is your most embarrassing story about the kitchen?

Describe the best emotional experience you've ever had as a chef.

Gender and emotion

Was there a past chef that was instrumental in your career?

What is your worst night at work like? Best?

What makes you most proud about being a chef? Why?

Do you feel that meeting people in the restaurant is important? Why?

What is your biggest asset as a chef? Why?

What is your ultimate goal as a chef? Why?

How do males usually act in the kitchen?

How do females usually act in the kitchen?

Do you feel that there are gender issues in the kitchen?

APPENDIX C

RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

- Sam Sam is 30 years old and the chef/owner of a small bistro. He has been in the business for 10 years and did not obtain a degree from a culinary institution. He is from Bosnia, and he began working in the business when a friend hired him at a local restaurant and he worked his way up to chef position. He is not married and has no children.
- Joe Joe is 49 years old and the chef of a multi-million dollar restaurant business. He has been in the business for 30 years and has no formal training or degree from a culinary institution. He apprenticed under a renowned chef and has a bachelor's degree in mathematics. He began working in the business as a job to get him through college and decided to stay in the industry. He is married and has three children.
- Dunn Dunn is 24 years old and the chef of a small independent restaurant. He has been in the industry for eight years and did not earn a degree from a culinary institution. He began as a dishwasher and eventually worked his way up to the chef position. He is not married and has no children.
- Tom Tom is 39 years old and the chef of a private country club. He has been in the business for 23 years and earned an Associate's Degree from the Culinary Institute of America, a premier culinary institution. He began as a dishwasher at the age of 16 and worked his way up. He has a wife and two children.

- Steve Steve is 41 years old and the chef of a high-volume restaurant in the West. He has been in the industry for 25 years and did not obtain a degree in the culinary field. He did an apprenticeship under a renowned chef rather than going to school. He began as a dishwasher and now runs the restaurant with his wife, who is the General Manager. He is married with two children.
- Jay Jay is 34 years old and the chef at a major country club in the South. He obtained an Associate's Degree from Johnson & Wales University and has been in the industry for 18 years. He began as a pasta maker in Olive Garden and has worked in the culinary industry since then. He is married with two children.
- Gary Gary is 33 years old and is the chef at a mountain-resort restaurant. He has been in the business for 13 years and has no formal training in the culinary industry. He began as a line cook at a small country club and worked his way up. He is not married and has no children.
- Edie Edie is 42 years old and is a chef at a hotel restaurant. She has been in the industry for 22 years and obtained a chef certificate from an apprentice program. She began in the hospitality industry and eventually ended up on the restaurant end of the business. She has a partner and no children.
- Jenny Jenny is 30 years old and is the chef at a high-volume restaurant. She has been in the industry for 16 years and obtained a culinary degree along with a second bachelor's degree in marketing. She began washing dishes at 14 and eventually worked her way up. She is not married and has no children.
- Lana Lana is 34 years old and is the chef/part owner of an independent restaurant in the South. She has been in the industry for 16 years and does not have a culinary degree. She began working as a deli sandwich maker

right after high school. She dropped out of her second year of college to pursue her culinary career. She is married with no children.

- Kelly Kelly is 35 years old and is the chef/part owner of an independent restaurant. She has been in the industry for 17 years and entered the field immediately after high school. She has no culinary degree but did an apprenticeship under a renowned chef. She is married with two children.
- Denise Denise is 51 years old and is the chef/owner of a small restaurant. She has been in the industry for 31 years and dropped out of college to pursue her career. She attended the Culinary Institute of America when women were vastly outnumbered by men. She is now a respected award-winning chef who has gained an enormous following. She is married with two children.
- Emma Emma is 39 years old and is the chef/owner of a small restaurant. She has been in the business for 19 years and dropped out of college to pursue her career. She has no formal culinary training, instead opting to train under a fellow chef until she opened her own catering business. She is married with two children.
- Mary Mary is 45 years old and is the chef/owner of a small restaurant in an upscale area of town. She has been in the business for 17 years and earned an Associate's Degree from the Culinary Institute of America. She began a pre-law degree at the University of Virginia and dropped out to pursue her culinary career at 28. She is married with two children.

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